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Topic: AMERICAN INDIAN

HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE INDIANS?

Q. How many Indians were there in what is now the United States at the time of its discovery?

A. No one knows, but it is estimated that there were approximately a million.

Q. How many Indians were there in the United States in 1920?

A. Approximately 270,500.

Q. How many Indians are there in the United States today?

A. There are approximately 335,000.

Q. To what is this tendency to increase due?

A. This tendency is due to progressively better living conditions and to adjustment to reservation life.

Q. Where do the Indians live?

A. There are small groups or bands in every state in the Union, many of whom retain tribal entity, but eighty-five per cent of the Indians live on the sixty-eight reservations, located in thirty-five states. The largest Indian population (est. 1935) is found in Oklahoma, 95,942. . . .

Q. How many Indian tribes are there?

A. Somewhat over two hundred on reservations, and over twenty-five more outside reservations.

Q. Which are the largest Indian tribes?

A. 1. Navajo, 43,555; 2. Sioux, 34,917; 3. Chippewa, 24,702.

Q. Are there great differences among the tribes?

A. The differences are as great as between a Spaniard and a Swede, a Dutchman and a Rumanian.

Q. What is a ward Indian?

A. There are two classes of ward Indians: 1. Indians who live upon a Federal Reservation and maintain tribal relations like, for example, the Apaches and Navajos. . . . 2. Indians who have any individual trust property (in their own right, not inherited), under Governmental control or supervision, whether or not they live upon a Federal Reservation or maintain tribal relations. . . .

Q. How was land on the reservation formerly distributed?

A. At first the land was held in common. The Indians' conception of land was like our conception of sea and sky. It could be used but not owned by individuals. This accounts for the Indians selling the land so cheaply as they did. They thought they were only selling the right to use the land for cultivation or hunting.

. . . . . .

Q. To what religion do the Indians belong?

A. By far the greatest number belong to various denominations of the Christian Church. Among tribes like the Navajo, there are many who still practice the ancient Indian religions. Many Indians combine a Christian faith with old religious ceremonial customs and dances. . . .

Q. Are Indians citizens of the United States?

A. All those born within the territorial limits of the United States are citizens.

Q. What language do the Indians speak?

A. Each tribe has its own tongue but many of the languages are very closely related.

Q. How do Indians earn their living?

A. Chiefly through their land, grazing, farming, forestry. . . . There is also a considerable amount of fishing.

Q. Is the Federal Government at the present time making an effort to carry out those treaty obligations incurred with the various tribes?

A. Yes, an earnest attempt is being made to provide adequate educational opportunities for Indian children. . . .

Q. What educational opportunities are provided for Indians?

A. There are twenty-one non-reservation boarding schools maintained by the Federal Government, thirty reservation building schools, and one hundred and forty-six day schools. These are of elementary, junior high and high school level. In addition, the Government pays tuition for Indian children in attendance in public schools. In 1935-6 there were 80,434 Indian children between six and eighteen years enrolled in schools through federal assistance. There are 14,540 Indian children for whom no school facilities could be provided because of lack of funds.

Q. What provision has been made for the training of Indians to assume positions of responsibility in the governing of their own affairs?

A. Indians who desire training beyond high school level are encouraged to attend the recognized colleges, universities, and vocational schools of the states in which they live. In 1935-6 a loan fund of $175,000 was established by Congress to aid worthy Indian students secure this type of training. Through this aid 258 Indian men and women were enrolled in colleges and universities last year. One hundred and forty-one were enrolled in trade and vocational schools. The greatest majority of these students plan to return to work among their people at the completion of their training. . . .

Q. What health facilities are available for the Indian peoples?

A. The Federal Government maintains ninety-two hospitals in Indian localities with 4,665 beds and 14 sanatoria with 1,197 beds. Health work among Indians is carried out by a field personnel of 141 full-time physicians, 85 contract physicians, 13 full-time dentists, 13 part-time dentists, 362 hospital nurses, and 645 other employees.

"Ask Me Another" on the Indians, from *Scholastic*, October 24, 1936.

CAPTURING THE SONG OF THE INDIAN

Unimaginable as a music-less world would seem to white people, it would be an obsolutely impossible world to the American Indian, our redskin brother who literally sings his way through life. Not for pay, not for mere amusement, not to hear himself sing, but to express his deep feeling for his religion, to accompany every event, great or small, in his life and in the life of his tribe and race.

The Indian himself hasn't preserved his marvelous store of tradition and song except in memory. It would be a closed book to us today if it hadn't been for the interest and devotion of a few "pale faces" who have gone among the Indians as friends and recorded their song.

The rich treasure house is by no means completely explored, and it would be a great loss to us if the work of such pioneers as Alice C. Fletcher and Francis La Flesch, her Omaha Indian collaborator, of Carlos Trayer, Natalie Curtis, and Frances Densmore, and of more recent seekers after Indian truth weren't carried on.

"Things stored safely underground won't change for a century or two longer," declared Miss Densmore, "and there's great interest in digging up relics buried in the earth. Why should the songs in the minds of the old Indians be allowed to die? They're our native culture, and the words of many are of a delicate poetry, that compare with the Chinese or Japanese, or with other exquisite poetry—clear, picturesque and forceful."

"To the Indian, song is the breath of the spirit that consecrates the acts of life," said Miss Curtis in the introduction to a monumental volume which she, as a sympathetic student of Indian life, collected entirely from the contributions of the Indians themselves.

"You might as well think of an Indian without his red skin as without his song," commented Thurlow Lieurance, composer, who confesses that the dream of his life has been to know the heart and soul of this race, which has been subjugated and suppressed until the rich heritage of his unique primitive art has almost been lost to the world.

And, from another angle: "American Indian song is a much bigger and more important matter than most people are aware of," says Arthur Farwell, another enthusiast and a well-known American composer. "In the first place it is the gateway to the entire Indian mythology and thus to the deepest understanding of the Indian. Then it holds much greater possibilities for one department of American musical development than have yet been realized."

Most of us, at some time or another, have heard the Indian music of which these ardent followers speak so feelingly, whether as an accompaniant to one of the dances which still are thrilling spectacles, or as the basis for "civilized" music written by the American composers who have found inspiration in it. What we have heard in the latter case is Indian song plus—plus an element which it doesn't contain in itself—harmony. In Indian song, which leans so strongly on the very first element of music, rhythm, carried by the melody, there's no conscious harmony as there is in our civilized music. When the Indian sings, he sings with one voice in unison. He has no accompaniment except the beating drum, the piping flute, the thud of rattles. What harmony completes his music is the wind sighing in the trees or whipping across the plains, the crackle of the fire, the hum of insects, the cries of beasts and birds. That's why Indian music is so bloodless, so skeletonlike, when it's played on the piano. Voices should carry it, and if it's to be harmonized, strings and woodwinds and additional voices make its message clearer. . . .

All the devotees who have explored Indian music realize this fact, and the composers who harmonize the songs keep the background of nature faithfully in mind in order not to falsify the original mood and setting of the songs.

Far from the early difficulties which surrounded recording this music, the older Indians are pathetically willing now to help preserve their cultural wealth. In the first attempts perplexities confronted the white people. Many songs were for certain occasions and ceremonies only, and the Indians had a superstitious reluctance to sing them out of place, or let them be recorded at all. But the old and wise men of the tribes, when offered friendship and sympathy, responded in kind, both for the sake of the heritage to the young Indians and for the chance of better understanding from the white races.

The Red Man Sings by Quintance Eaton, *Better Homes and Gardens*, August, 1936.

BUTTONS FOR BREAD

Navajo coin buttons have appeared in the tills of the Indian country—a sure sign of something amiss on the reservation.

The buttons—dimes, quarters, and half dollars with soldered copper eyes—provide an unfailing economic barometer of the Navajo tribe. In times of prosperity the jewelry-loving Indians sew the buttons to moccasins, jackets and shirts, spending them only as a last resort.

Now, near the end of a long, cold Winter, hard pressed for feed for their flocks, the Navajos are snipping the buttons from their clothes to spend with the traders.

Tourists accept the coin buttons with suspicion. To bankers they are a nuisance, impossible to stack with their protruding eyes. But the inconveniences of the ill-omened coins are unimportant in the light of what they augur. The Indian country knows that when the Navajos button their clothes with sticks instead of silver, misfortune has come to the reservation.

Indians Spend Buttons, from *The New York Times*, February 14, 1937.

THE INDIAN IN THE POPULATION

Showing a 1 per cent gain over 1935, 334,013 Indians are now registered on Federal rolls, according to the Indian Bureau. As defined by the Federal authorities, an Indian is a person of Indian blood who acquires certain rights through wardship, treaty or inheritance.

The population on the government rolls is not necessarily domiciled on or near Indian reservations. Many on the rolls live thousands of miles away.

Oklahoma still boasts the largest Indian population. Including the five civilized tribes, the Miami and the Peoria Indians, the State has 96,244 Indians, or 28.8 per cent of the national total. Arizona ranks second with 45,013, followed by New Mexico, with 35,570, South Dakota with 27,401,

and California with 23,824. Five other States have an Indian population of 10,000 or more—Montana, Minnesota, Washington, Wisconsin and North Dakota.

The largest tribes are the Navajo, the Sioux and the Chippewas, with respective counts of 44,078, 35,412 and 26,127.

Indion Populotion Goins During Year, from *The New York Times,* February 14, 1937.

YAQUI OBSERVANCE OF LENT

Yaqui Indians, who fled from cruelties in Mexico years ago, carry on into the alkali flats of Arizona a species of Passion drama that is strange to all except Yaquis and not well understood by them. Mummers call themselves Fariseos (Pharisees). On the first Friday in Lent one of them dons a grotesque mask, takes up a long decorated staff and goes out into the desert. Each week an additional searcher is sent forth. They act the part of enemies of Christ, myrmidons of Pilate who seek to find the Messiah to deliver him up.

They look in the desert brush, behind giant sahuaros, and on the eve of Good Friday, the Night of Sorrow, they approach, marching to drums, the supposed Garden of Gethsemane. They close in. With black drapes over their masks to conceal their assumed identities, the soldiers of Pilate peer into clumps of bushes that might hide him they seek to take captive.

The savage thumping of the drums grows louder, the violins and guitars reach a piercing intensity—for a climax impends. Then the music breaks; the onlookers who have assembled are silent with suspense. The Fariseos strip away the protective shrubbery, find the Christ and carry him off to his doom. On Good Friday the mumming Fariseos are triumphant.

Other tribal actors then go into mourning. Women change their gaudy robes for black and wind black shawls around their heads. Men put on black shirts. One mourning party of men array themselves in white and wear crowns of thorns as a sign of devotion to the persecuted Master. The night after Good Friday the Pilatos cease their hilarity and at midnight solemnly atone for their sins as Fariseos and captors of the Christ. . . .

The Yaquis who give these odd, partly Christian, partly ancient Indian pagan dramatic spectacles have settled at several points. Some are at Tubac, historic old fort on the Highway of the Devil (El Camino del Diablo). More ended their flight at Tucson (El Pueblo) and the rest are in the Salt River valley, where they raised their adobe-walled huts, their ramadas (sheds of greasewood and grass, where their savage dances mark burials, baptisms and marriages) and began making their living by working in the white men's cotton fields.

Many age-old superstitions still influence Yaqui lives. To be born in bed is dangerous, Yaquis believe, for if a baby is born in bed the devil, lurking underneath, will take possession of the child's spirit and he will grow up a sort of devil himself. So the Yaqui babes are born on the floor.

Brides and grooms will not allow their photographs to be taken on their wedding day unless they belong to the generation that is breaking away from the old Yaqui beliefs. Death, it is feared, would be hurried by such photography. The Yaquis do not like any sort of publicity because they do not want to have records of their beliefs spread over the country to be preserved after Yaquis have died off.

Possion Drama by Yaquis, by Marguerite Naegle, from *The New York Times,* April 5, 1936.

DOCTORING IN THE DESERT

One of the greatest problems in hospital evangelistic work is keeping in touch with those who have confessed Christ and have gone out to their own homes—away off to places where we cannot reach them readily. John can travel all over that part of the country on horseback preaching to his own people, in their own language, the message of salvation. He may also be able to do some real missionary work in that great untouched field where there are no roads on which one can travel with an automobile.

There are no marble halls or terraced floors in Sage Memorial Hospital at Ganado but it is a well planned, businesslike hospital and its 80 beds are usually full; last winter we reached a record of 142 in-patients at one time. There is a staff of four physicians, a dentist, a technician, a dietitian; eight graduate and twenty-four student nurses who represent sixteen tribes or races. All are high school graduates, most of them are mission school graduates, coming from homes as widely separated as California, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Nevada, Alaska and Arizona. They are not preparing to be nurses just because they want to do something different or to earn a livelihood, but because they have seen a vision of how they may serve Christ that way. Freedom-loving natures sometimes chafe under the discipline and hard work but stronger than the love of freedom is the love of the Great Physician, and the desire to have a share in His healing ministry.

Patients come to Ganado from far and near. Some have never slept in a bed before; some have never before known the care of anyone but the Indian medicine man. Often five or six medicine men themselves are in the wards for treatment and they are just as responsive to the kindly touch and the relief of suffering as anyone else. What a contrast there is in the cleanliness, scientific skill and loving care given to the sick at Ganado and the treatment of the sufferers by the Indian medicine men! They claim to be able to cure all kinds of diseases with their rattles, sand paintings, prayers, songs and chants. When a medicine man sings over a sick one, the "sing" is held in a hogan or Indian hut, and is a sort of incantation to drive away the evil spirit that causes the disease. When one is sick the medicine man must find out the cause and then certain songs are sung for different symbols. A medicine man is paid for every ceremony, either in money or in sheep or goats. In this way the people are being kept in darkness.

Christ Comes to the Navajo by C. G. Salsbury, M.D., Ganado, Arizona; *Missionary Review of the World,* February, 1937.

HERBS AND THE MEDICINE MAN

The character of the Navajo country with its varying altitudes, temperatures and humidity, accounts for the number and diversity of flora the Indians can obtain for medicinal use. From the lowlands along the Little Colorado to the highest peaks of the Pagosa Mountains, the medicine men seem to know just where to find the roots, leaves, and pollen needed for their ritualistic healing rites.

Perhaps a half of all the Navajo names for the flora of this section begin with "Azay" or "medicine" and another large per cent end with "Tahn," meaning "corn" or food. The "Azay" signifies that this plant or herb is used in some form of healing ceremony, but this does not necessarily mean that it contains drugs or medicinal properties. Many kinds of plants are gathered and tied into bundles to be pressed against the patient's limbs, arms, body, or head, according to where the pain or injury may be. Others are used for fumigation because of their pleasant odor.

Not many Navajo medicine men have the slightest idea of the actual effects of the various native herbs, roots, or seeds if they were taken internally. Nearly all of the present-day healers gather the "medicines" they have been taught belong to their ceremony, chop them all together and mix them with water. This infusion is then given to the patient as sort of a magic brew to be sipped and poured over the exposed portions of the body. But there still remain a few elderly medicine men and a few ancient grand-dames who do know a great deal about native herbs and their uses. Also the food values of the various tubers, root-stalks, nuts, seeds and fruits to be found on the reservation.

A complete list of every food plant used by the Navajos when they were a roving people and before they cultivated corn, combined with the methods of preparing the edible portions for human consumption, would probably fill a good sized volume. But so much of this old-time lore has been forgotten that the task of compiling such a book would not be an easy one.

Medicine Men Use Variety of Herbs in Mystic Rituals, by Franc Johnson Newcomb; *The Gallup Independent,* August 25, 1936.

THINGS FOR WHICH WE ARE INDEBTED TO THE INDIAN

"It is impossible to enumerate all the important plants used as food, medicine and dyes, and the textile and other economic plants discovered and introduced into cultivation by the American aborigines before the time of Columbus," writes W. E. Safford in *Our Heritage from the American Indians.*

"Some have proved to be of great benefit to humanity. The cultivation of maize, beans, tomatoes, potatoes, sweet potatoes, cayenne pepper, squashes, manioc and pineapples is today widely spread. The Jerusalem artichoke (Helianthus tuberosus), noticed by Champlain in the gardens of the New England Indians before the arrival of the English, is grown today in France; and sunflower seeds (Helianthus annuus), from which our Indians extracted an excellent oil, are produced in large quantities in Russia.

"The yellow-flavored nicotiana rustica of the Aztecs and North American Indians also is cultivated in Russia, where it is known under the name of 'peasants' tobacco. The pink-flowered nicotiana tabacum, which has replaced it in our country, has penetrated to the most remote regions of the earth.

"Cacao, from which the ancient inhabitants of Mexico prepared their chocolate, is one of the most important plants cultivated in all tropical countries.

"During the late war some of the greatest comforts supplied to our soldiers in the trenches came from vegetable products which are a heritage from the American Indians—cigars, cigarettes, chocolate, cocoa, peanuts, preserved pineapples, maple sugar; some of the most nourishing foods, such as potatoes, maize in the form of popcorn, canned corn, corn bread, corn flakes, dried and canned beans, sweet potatoes, and tapioca.

"We owe all these products and many others to the American Indians. In the hospitals the elastic tubes of the surgical instruments were made of rubber; but the greatest blessing of all was the cocaine, which permitted the performance of surgical operations without pain, and this is a direct heritage from the Indians of Peru."

Contributions by Indians Include Chocolate, Beans, from *The Gollup Independent,* August 25, 1936.

MANY TONGUES

In the Southwest there are seven distinct language groups spoken by the Indians—Shoshonean, Zunian, Keresean, Tanoan, all spoken in the Pueblos; Athapasca, spoken by the Navajo and Apache; Yuman spoken by the Wallapai, Havasupia and Maricopa; and Piman, spoken by the Pimas and Papagos.

Seven Longuage Groups, from *The Gallup Independent,* August 25, 1936.

MISSIONS AMONG THE NAVAJOS

At Ganado, Christian education is well rounded, beginning with the teaching of the alphabet and ending with the twelfth grade. The high school offers an academic course for those who wish to enter college or university and its graduates may enter the state university without examination. The larger number, who do not wish to take advanced academic work, can take practical courses in farming and dairying, carpentry, power plant operation and auto mechanics. The purpose is to develop Christian leaders in the various professions and occupations and to inculcate the Spirit of Christ with each lesson. In this way we instil the principles of Christianity both by precept and example.

To care for the distinctly religious training, there are Bible teachers on the faculty; but the instructors in secular subjects also use every opportunity to drive home the vital truths in the teachings of Christ. Most important of all is the personal interest each teacher takes in her pupils. She seeks not only to improve their minds, and to raise their standard of living and improve their moral tone, but earnestly endeavors to win them to Christ.

The community and field activities of the mission are among the most important phases of the work. At Cornfields, a community center is maintained with a white worker and interpreter. Here are facilities for bathing, laundering and sewing. Camp visitation, classes for children and various vocational projects are also carried on.

"Do the Indians appreciate your work among them?" is a question often asked by our white friends. Today we can say, "Yes, we know they do." For example: a few days after a serious fire at Cornfields, when our community station there was destroyed, we went to the Sunrise Trading Post to buy a few needed things. About sixteen or eighteen Indians were standing about outside the store. While talking to some of them, the head Indian of the Cornfields Valley stood up and addressed the crowd in his native tongue. He told them that we had lost everything in the fire and said:

"They never refuse to come to our hogans when someone is ill or to take a sufferer to their hospital; they never ask us if we are Protestant or Catholic; they treat us all alike, and even care for our medicine men. Now they have lost everything and we ought to show that we appreciate them. We are glad that they are not going to leave us."

Then the judge stood up and repeated some of the things mentioned by the headman. After that he took off his hat and put it on the ground asking the Indians to make their contributions. We saw silver money and tin, square and round, fall into the hat. God had touched the hearts of these brown friends to show us that our work has not been in vain.

Christ Comes to the Novojo by C. G. Salsbury, M.D., Ganado, Arizona; *Missionary Review of the World,* February, 1937.